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EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG YOUTH—SUMMER 2006

From April to July, the number of employed youth 16 to 24 years old increased by 2.5 million to 21.9 million, the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor reported today. July is the traditional summertime peak for youth employment. This summer's increase in youth employment was slightly lower than last year's 2.7 million increase. Unemployment among youth increased by 658,000 between April and July, a much larger rise than in the prior year but about the same as in 2003 and 2004. (Because this analysis focuses on the seasonal changes in youth employment and unemployment that occur every spring and summer, the data are not seasonally adjusted.)

Labor Force

The youth labor force—16- to 24-year-olds working or actively looking for work—grows sharply between April and July each year. During these months, large numbers of high school and college students take or search for summer jobs, and many graduates enter the labor market to look for or begin permanent employment. This summer, the youth labor force grew by 3.2 million to a total of 24.7 million in July. (See table 1.)

The labor force participation rate for youth—the proportion of their population working or looking for work—was 66.7 percent in July. This was essentially unchanged from a year earlier (66.6 percent), but about 11 percentage points below its peak in 1989 (77.5 percent). Over the 1989-2006 period, the proportion of youth enrolled in school in July rose, and youth enrolled in school are much less likely than those not in school to be in the labor force.

The July 2006 labor force participation rates for 16- to 24-year old women (63.6 percent) and men (69.7 percent) were unchanged over the year. For several decades prior to 1989, young men's July labor force participation rate showed no clear trend, ranging from 81 to 86 percent. Since July 1989, however, their rate has declined by about 13 percentage points. Young women's July labor force participation rate, which had plateaued during the 1980s and most of the 1990s after a long-term upward trend, has fallen by about 9 percentage points since 1989.

The July participation rates for whites (69.6 percent), blacks (57.7 percent), and Hispanics or Latinos (61.5 percent) showed little or no change over the year. For all three groups, labor force participation rates are about 10 percentage points lower than their peak levels in 1989. The rate for Asians (46.6 percent) declined over the year. (See table 2.)

Employment

In July 2006, 21.9 million 16- to 24-year-olds were employed. The employment-population ratio for youth—the proportion of the 16- to 24-year-old civilian noninstitutional population that was employed—was 59.2 percent, about the same as in July 2005. The ratio has held fairly steady for the past three summers after falling by about 11 percentage points between July 1989 and July 2003. The employment-population ratios for young men (61.9 percent), women (56.5 percent), whites (63.3 percent), blacks (43.5 percent), Asians (42.8 percent), and Hispanics or Latinos (55.2 percent) were all little changed from a year earlier.

In July 2006, 22 percent of employed youth worked in the leisure and hospitality industry (which includes food services) and 21 percent worked in retail trade. In addition, nearly a third of employed youth worked in construction, education and health services, professional and business services, and government combined. (See table 3.)

Unemployment

In July 2006, 2.8 million youth were unemployed. The youth unemployment rate—11.2 percent—was about the same as in July 2005. The July 2006 youth unemployment rates for men (11.2 percent), women (11.1 percent), whites (9.0 percent), blacks (24.7 percent), Asians (8.2 percent), and Hispanics or Latinos (10.4 percent), showed little change from a year earlier. (See table 2.)

Technical Note

The estimates in this release were obtained from the Current Population Survey (CPS), a national sample survey of 60,000 households conducted monthly for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) by the U.S. Census Bureau. The data in this release relate to the employment status of youth (16- to 24-year-olds) during the months of April-July. This period was selected as being the most representative time frame in which to measure the full summertime transition from school to work. July is the peak summer month of youth employment.

Beginning in January 2006, data reflect revised population controls used in the CPS. For a discussion of the introduction of the revised population controls and the impact that their introduction had on the CPS data, see “Adjustments to Household Survey Population Estimates in January 2006” in the February 2006 issue of *Employment and Earnings*, available at <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cps06adj.pdf> on the BLS Web site.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; TDD message referral phone: 1-800-877-8339.

Reliability

Statistics based on the CPS are subject to both sampling and nonsampling error. When a sample, rather than the entire population, is surveyed, there is a chance that the sample estimates may differ from the “true” population values they represent. The exact difference, or *sampling error*, varies depending upon the particular sample selected, and this variability is measured by the standard error of the estimate. There is about a 90-percent chance, or level of confidence, that an estimate based on a sample will differ by no more than 1.6 standard errors from the “true” population value because of sampling error. BLS analyses are generally conducted at the 90-percent level of confidence.

The CPS data also are affected by *nonsampling error*. Nonsampling error can occur for many reasons, including the failure to sample a segment of the population, inability to obtain information for all respondents in the sample, inability or unwillingness of respondents to provide correct information, and errors made in the collection or processing of the data.

For a full discussion of the reliability of data from the CPS and information on estimating standard errors, see the

“Explanatory Notes and Estimates of Error” section of *Employment and Earnings*.

Definitions

The principal definitions used in this release are described briefly below.

Employed persons are (a) all those who, during the survey reference week, did any work at all as paid employees, worked in their own business, profession, or on their own farm, or who worked 15 hours or more as unpaid workers in a family-operated enterprise; and (b) all those who did not work but had jobs or businesses from which they were temporarily absent due to illness, bad weather, vacation, child-care problems, labor disputes or personal reasons, whether or not they were paid by their employers for the time off and whether or not they were seeking other jobs.

Unemployed persons are all persons who had no employment during the reference week, were available for work, except for temporary illness, and had made specific efforts to find employment sometime during the 4 weeks preceding the survey. Persons who were waiting to be recalled to a job from which they had been laid off need not have been looking for work to be classified as unemployed.

Civilian labor force comprises all persons classified as employed or unemployed.

Unemployment rate represents the number of unemployed persons as a percent of the civilian labor force.

Not in the labor force includes all persons who are not classified as employed or unemployed.

Industry and class of worker for the employed relate to the job held in the survey reference week. Persons with two or more jobs are classified in the job at which they worked the greatest number of hours. In terms of class-of-worker categories, wage and salary workers are those who receive wages, salaries, commissions, tips, or pay-in-kind from a private employer or from a government unit; self-employed persons are those who work for profit or fees in their own business, profession, or trade, or operate a farm; and unpaid family workers are persons working without pay for 15 hours a week or more in an enterprise operated by a member of their family.

Table 1. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 to 24 years of age by sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, April-July 2006

(Numbers in thousands. Data are not seasonally adjusted.)

Employment status, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	April	May	June	July	April-July changes ¹	
					Number	Percent
TOTAL						
Civilian noninstitutional population	36,854	36,897	36,943	36,989	135	.4
Civilian labor force	21,498	22,023	24,128	24,664	3,166	14.7
Participation rate	58.3	59.7	65.3	66.7	8.3	14.3
Employed	19,406	19,769	21,268	21,914	2,508	12.9
Employment-population ratio	52.7	53.6	57.6	59.2	6.6	12.5
Unemployed	2,092	2,254	2,860	2,750	658	31.5
Looking for full-time work	1,432	1,575	2,044	2,028	596	41.6
Looking for part-time work	660	679	817	722	62	9.4
Unemployment rate	9.7	10.2	11.9	11.2	1.4	14.6
Not in labor force	15,356	14,874	12,815	12,324	-3,031	-19.7
Men						
Civilian noninstitutional population	18,603	18,626	18,651	18,675	71	.4
Civilian labor force	11,308	11,649	12,771	13,024	1,716	15.2
Participation rate	60.8	62.5	68.5	69.7	9.0	14.7
Employed	10,093	10,324	11,225	11,568	1,475	14.6
Employment-population ratio	54.3	55.4	60.2	61.9	7.7	14.2
Unemployed	1,215	1,324	1,546	1,456	240	19.8
Looking for full-time work	865	1,007	1,172	1,152	288	33.3
Looking for part-time work	351	317	374	303	-47	-13.5
Unemployment rate	10.7	11.4	12.1	11.2	.4	4.0
Not in labor force	7,295	6,978	5,879	5,651	-1,644	-22.5
Women						
Civilian noninstitutional population	18,250	18,271	18,293	18,314	64	.4
Civilian labor force	10,190	10,375	11,357	11,641	1,451	14.2
Participation rate	55.8	56.8	62.1	63.6	7.7	13.8
Employed	9,313	9,445	10,043	10,346	1,033	11.1
Employment-population ratio	51.0	51.7	54.9	56.5	5.5	10.7
Unemployed	877	930	1,314	1,295	418	47.7
Looking for full-time work	567	568	871	876	308	54.3
Looking for part-time work	309	361	443	419	109	35.4
Unemployment rate	8.6	9.0	11.6	11.1	2.5	29.3
Not in labor force	8,060	7,896	6,936	6,673	-1,387	-17.2
White						
Civilian noninstitutional population	28,647	28,675	28,706	28,736	90	.3
Civilian labor force	17,424	17,801	19,596	20,002	2,578	14.8
Participation rate	60.8	62.1	68.3	69.6	8.8	14.4
Employed	16,009	16,204	17,584	18,193	2,185	13.6
Employment-population ratio	55.9	56.5	61.3	63.3	7.4	13.3
Unemployed	1,415	1,596	2,012	1,808	393	27.8
Looking for full-time work	917	1,063	1,413	1,289	371	40.5
Looking for part-time work	498	533	599	520	22	4.3
Unemployment rate	8.1	9.0	10.3	9.0	.9	11.3
Not in labor force	11,223	10,875	9,110	8,735	-2,488	-22.2
Black or African American						
Civilian noninstitutional population	5,393	5,404	5,415	5,426	33	.6
Civilian labor force	2,733	2,854	3,006	3,133	400	14.6
Participation rate	50.7	52.8	55.5	57.7	7.1	14.0
Employed	2,208	2,332	2,357	2,361	153	6.9
Employment-population ratio	40.9	43.2	43.5	43.5	2.6	6.3
Unemployed	525	522	649	772	247	47.1
Looking for full-time work	409	418	483	617	208	50.8
Looking for part-time work	116	104	166	155	39	33.9
Unemployment rate	19.2	18.3	21.6	24.7	5.4	28.3
Not in labor force	2,660	2,550	2,408	2,293	-368	-13.8

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 to 24 years of age by sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, April-July 2006 — Continued

(Numbers in thousands. Data are not seasonally adjusted.)

Employment status, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	April	May	June	July	April-July changes ¹	
					Number	Percent
Asian						
Civilian noninstitutional population	1,463	1,475	1,474	1,474	11	.8
Civilian labor force	602	619	678	687	86	14.2
Participation rate	41.1	42.0	46.0	46.6	5.5	13.4
Employed	562	581	601	631	69	12.3
Employment-population ratio	38.4	39.4	40.7	42.8	4.4	11.5
Unemployed	40	38	78	56	16	41.4
Looking for full-time work	31	25	58	33	2	6.3
Looking for part-time work	9	13	20	23	15	169.5
Unemployment rate	6.6	6.1	11.5	8.2	1.6	23.8
Not in labor force	861	856	796	787	-75	-8.7
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity						
Civilian noninstitutional population	6,372	6,383	6,394	6,406	34	.5
Civilian labor force	3,664	3,712	3,854	3,943	279	7.6
Participation rate	57.5	58.1	60.3	61.5	4.0	7.0
Employed	3,339	3,386	3,414	3,534	195	5.8
Employment-population ratio	52.4	53.0	53.4	55.2	2.8	5.3
Unemployed	325	326	440	409	84	25.8
Looking for full-time work	229	239	331	287	58	25.3
Looking for part-time work	96	87	109	122	26	27.1
Unemployment rate	8.9	8.8	11.4	10.4	1.5	16.9
Not in labor force	2,708	2,671	2,540	2,463	-245	-9.0

¹ Changes are calculated using unrounded data.

NOTE: Estimates for the above race groups (white, black or African American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. In addition, persons whose ethnicity is identified

as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race and, therefore, are classified by ethnicity as well as by race. Data reflect revised population controls introduced in January 2006.

Table 2. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 to 24 years of age by sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, July 2003-2006

(Numbers in thousands. Data are not seasonally adjusted.)

Employment status, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	2003	2004	2005	2006
TOTAL				
Civilian noninstitutional population	35,905	36,415	36,681	36,989
Civilian labor force	24,150	24,465	24,436	24,664
Participation rate	67.3	67.2	66.6	66.7
Employed	20,950	21,447	21,749	21,914
Employment-population ratio	58.3	58.9	59.3	59.2
Unemployed	3,200	3,018	2,688	2,750
Looking for full-time work	2,448	2,212	1,916	2,028
Looking for part-time work	753	806	771	722
Unemployment rate	13.3	12.3	11.0	11.2
Not in labor force	11,755	11,950	12,244	12,324
Men				
Civilian noninstitutional population	18,042	18,356	18,501	18,675
Civilian labor force	12,635	12,925	12,871	13,024
Participation rate	70.0	70.4	69.6	69.7
Employed	10,838	11,373	11,393	11,568
Employment-population ratio	60.1	62.0	61.6	61.9
Unemployed	1,796	1,552	1,478	1,456
Looking for full-time work	1,416	1,176	1,077	1,152
Looking for part-time work	381	377	401	303
Unemployment rate	14.2	12.0	11.5	11.2
Not in labor force	5,407	5,431	5,630	5,651
Women				
Civilian noninstitutional population	17,863	18,059	18,180	18,314
Civilian labor force	11,516	11,540	11,566	11,641
Participation rate	64.5	63.9	63.6	63.6
Employed	10,112	10,074	10,356	10,346
Employment-population ratio	56.6	55.8	57.0	56.5
Unemployed	1,404	1,465	1,209	1,295
Looking for full-time work	1,032	1,036	839	876
Looking for part-time work	372	429	370	419
Unemployment rate	12.2	12.7	10.5	11.1
Not in labor force	6,348	6,519	6,614	6,673
White				
Civilian noninstitutional population	28,066	28,410	28,566	28,736
Civilian labor force	19,749	19,859	19,712	20,002
Participation rate	70.4	69.9	69.0	69.6
Employed	17,566	17,848	17,944	18,193
Employment-population ratio	62.6	62.8	62.8	63.3
Unemployed	2,182	2,011	1,768	1,808
Looking for full-time work	1,611	1,406	1,234	1,289
Looking for part-time work	571	605	533	520
Unemployment rate	11.1	10.1	9.0	9.0
Not in labor force	8,317	8,551	8,854	8,735
Black or African American				
Civilian noninstitutional population	5,159	5,245	5,317	5,426
Civilian labor force	2,930	3,029	3,097	3,133
Participation rate	56.8	57.7	58.3	57.7
Employed	2,150	2,224	2,378	2,361
Employment-population ratio	41.7	42.4	44.7	43.5
Unemployed	780	804	719	772
Looking for full-time work	655	666	544	617
Looking for part-time work	125	138	176	155
Unemployment rate	26.6	26.6	23.2	24.7
Not in labor force	2,229	2,216	2,220	2,293

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 to 24 years of age by sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, July 2003-2006 — Continued

(Numbers in thousands. Data are not seasonally adjusted.)

Employment status, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	2003	2004	2005	2006
Asian				
Civilian noninstitutional population	1,464	1,503	1,497	1,474
Civilian labor force	740	786	794	687
Participation rate	50.5	52.3	53.1	46.6
Employed	642	719	699	631
Employment-population ratio	43.8	47.8	46.7	42.8
Unemployed	98	68	95	56
Looking for full-time work	63	46	58	33
Looking for part-time work	34	22	38	23
Unemployment rate	13.2	8.6	12.0	8.2
Not in labor force	724	716	702	787
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity				
Civilian noninstitutional population	6,079	6,275	6,335	6,406
Civilian labor force	3,772	3,926	3,800	3,943
Participation rate	62.0	62.6	60.0	61.5
Employed	3,244	3,428	3,428	3,534
Employment-population ratio	53.4	54.6	54.1	55.2
Unemployed	528	498	372	409
Looking for full-time work	406	373	292	287
Looking for part-time work	121	125	80	122
Unemployment rate	14.0	12.7	9.8	10.4
Not in labor force	2,307	2,349	2,536	2,463

NOTE: Estimates for the above race groups (white, black or African American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. In addition, persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race and, therefore,

are classified by ethnicity as well as by race. Data for 2003-2006 reflect revised population controls introduced each January of 2003-2006.

Table 3. Employed persons 16 to 24 years of age by industry, class of worker, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, July 2005-2006

(Numbers in thousands. Data are not seasonally adjusted.)

Industry and class of worker	Total		White		Black or African American		Asian		Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	
	2005	2006	2005	2006	2005	2006	2005	2006	2005	2006
Total employed	21,749	21,914	17,944	18,193	2,378	2,361	699	631	3,428	3,534
Agriculture and related industries	341	411	320	395	11	9	-	-	80	116
Nonagricultural industries	21,407	21,503	17,624	17,798	2,367	2,352	699	631	3,347	3,418
Private wage and salary workers	19,410	19,513	16,066	16,218	2,066	2,086	642	580	3,102	3,146
Mining	57	67	43	62	11	-	2	1	19	20
Construction	1,551	1,704	1,406	1,558	91	100	7	8	453	512
Manufacturing	1,423	1,392	1,166	1,173	171	142	27	26	298	302
Durable goods	853	862	736	729	70	72	14	24	179	153
Nondurable goods	570	530	429	444	100	70	14	2	119	149
Wholesale trade	414	371	342	335	33	19	19	3	71	73
Retail trade	4,384	4,548	3,590	3,678	498	565	138	156	564	562
Transportation and utilities	510	440	412	347	68	75	5	6	70	71
Information	422	410	333	316	61	63	15	14	49	42
Financial activities	1,142	959	954	740	96	129	59	51	210	114
Professional and business services	1,563	1,489	1,245	1,250	215	161	62	35	262	268
Education and health services	2,072	2,098	1,646	1,611	295	311	91	92	229	216
Leisure and hospitality	4,770	4,909	3,979	4,130	455	474	167	155	694	785
Other services	1,103	1,127	951	1,018	72	48	50	32	183	181
Government	1,577	1,516	1,186	1,179	286	232	37	41	159	192
Federal	230	198	166	133	49	43	5	6	19	25
State	470	462	342	354	97	60	27	20	37	49
Local	877	856	678	693	140	129	5	14	103	118
Self-employed and unpaid family workers	420	474	372	401	15	34	20	11	87	81

- Dash represents or rounds to zero.

NOTE: Estimates for the above race groups (white, black or African American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. In addition, persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or

Latino may be of any race and, therefore, are classified by ethnicity as well as by race. Data for 2005 and 2006 reflect revised population controls introduced in January 2005 and January 2006.